

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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P R 221426Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4558

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS EAIR EAID PFOR ET US

SUBJECT: EAL, THE DIRG AND TWA: UPDATE

REF: ADDIS 4580 AND PREVIOUS

SENIOR AMERICAN TWA ADVISER (WHO MUST BE FULLY PROTECTED) TO
EAL GENERAL MANAGER INFORMED EMBASSY MAY 22 AT OWN INITIATIVE
AS FOLLOWS:

1. BEFORE ASSUMING HIS NEW RESPONSIBILITIES, EAL'S FORMER
GENERAL MANAGER, COL. SEMRAT MEDHANE, DRAFTED LETTER TO CHAIRMAN
EAL'S BOARD OF FUTURE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EAL AND TWA. NUB OF
COMMUNICATION IS SEMRAT'S FEELING THAT EAL/TWA TIE MAY YET BE
PRESERVED PROVIDING EAL AND DIRG TAKE REQUISITE STEPS TO REASSURE
TWA'S MANAGEMENT THAT INTEGRITY EAL WILL BE MAINTAINED AND
AUTHORITY EAL'S MANAGEMENT WILL BE SUPPORTED BY BOARD AND DIRG.
EMBASSY WILL POUCH DEPARTMENT COPY OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

2. EAL'S NEW GENERAL MANAGER, BG TAFESSE AYALEW, GOING
THROUGH STIFF LEARNING PROCESSES, SOURCE SAID. HE HAS LONG WAY
TO GO, IS DOING REASONABLE WELL BUT AS EXPECTED, HAS ALREADY
STUMBLED SEVERAL TIMES. IT CLEAR TO SOURCE FROM GROWING CONTACT
WITH TAFESSE, LATTER'S STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS, THAT HE WAS
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SELECTED BY DIRG TO REPLACE COL. SEMRAT WITH SOMEONE MORE

MALLEABLE AND RESPONSIVE TO DIRG'S WISHES.

3. BE AS IT MAY, BG TAFESSE HAS PUBLICLY MADE CLEAR TO EAL MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEES IMPORTANCE WHICH HE ATTACHES TO PRESERVATION EAL'S RELATIONS WITH TWA. STATEMENT, SOURCE FEELS, INCONCEIVABLE WITHOUT DIRG ENDORSEMENT. UNFORTUNATELY, SOURCE IS CONVINCED THAT BG TAFESSE HAS ALREADY RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS FROM DIRG TO PLACE SELECTED ETHIOPIANS IN KEY POSITION OF EAL PERSONNEL STRUCTURE. IN OTHER WORDS, SOURCE FEELS THAT DIRG INTERVENTION IN EAL'S MANAGEMENT PROCESSES CONTINUING TO EXPAND. ACCORDINGLY, SOURCE IS STRENGTHENED IN HIS CONVICTION THAT TWA HAS TAKEN SOUND DECISION (CF ADDIS 4339) ON FUTURE ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH EAL.

4. BG TAFESSE HAS NOW APPROACHED SOURCE AND ASKED TO KNOW WHAT EAL MUST DO TO PRESERVE CONNECTION WITH TWA. ALTHOUGH, FOR REASONS ABOVE-STATED, SOURCE DEEMS IT UNLIKELY THAT TWA'S MANAGEMENT WILL CHANGE ITS POSITION, AND HAS CONVEYED THIS TO TAFESSE, HE HAS ALSO GIVEN HIM FOLLOWING SET OF SUGGESTIONS: A) TAFESSE SHOULD ARRANGE EARLY FACE-TO-FACE MEETING WITH TWA'S MANAGEMENT IN NEW YORK: B) TAFESSE SHOULD GO TO NEW YORK, ACCOMPANIED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF EAL'S BOARD AND OF DIRG WOU WOULD BE ABLE SUPPORT GENERAL MANGAER'S EFFORTS CONVINCING TWA OF EAL'S CONTINUING MANAGEMENT INTEGRITY.

5. TAFESSE EXPLAINED THAT HE COULD NOT LEAVE FOR NEW YORK IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE BUT WOULD WRITE LETTER WE HAVE COPY THIS COMMUNICATION AND WILL POUCH SAME) TO TWA'S J.E. FRANKUM, VICE-PRESIDENT OF FLIGHT OPERATIONS, SET FORTH RELEVANT VIEWS PENDING SUCH TIME (JUNE?) AS MEETING MAY BE HELD. SOURCE, WHO LEAVES ADDIS FOR NEW YORK ON PERSONAL BUSINESS MAY 24, WILL HAND-CARRY THIS LETTER.

6. SOURCE SPECULATED TO US THAT IF MEETING BETWEEN EAL'S NEW GENERAL MANAGER AND TWA'S MANAGEMENT IS HELD IN JUNE, A FINAL DECISION ON FUTURE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO AIRLINES MAY WELL BE READY FOR IMPLEMENTATION BY SEPTEMBER. HUMMEL

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